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Gingrich Aide Settles $15,450 Bill for $50

■ House Speaker **Newt Gingrich's** press secretary, **Tony Blankley**, has sent the White House press office a $50 check for being nice to reporters. The check came after White House press secretary **Michael McCurry** ordered his aides to do something nice for reporters or pay $1 to the office pizza kitty.

Blankley wrote the White House tweaking McCurry and suggesting positive incentives, not punitive ones. He offered $5 "if . . . you have been courteous to one of our friends in the press corps."

But Blankley rejected a response from 10 White House press office aides who demanded that he fork over $15,450, the bill the aides calculated he owed them for all the good things they had done for the press over the last two years.

"I am delighted that you have so quickly improved your press skills as a result of my positive Republican incentive plan," Blankley wrote Monday. "Now you need to work on your reading skills," he said, noting that he promised to pay each of the 10 aides $5 "if you have been courteous to **'one'** of our friends in the press corps." That's $50. "Please find enclosed a check for that sum," he said. "Your greedy assertion that I owe you $15,450 is typical of the Democrat Party's misuse of other people's money and misreading of legislative intent for the purpose of expanding programs beyond their carefully crafted objectives," he said.

Spend the $50 any way you want, he said, but "I would suggest that you either buy one good bottle of Scotch, or 10 cheap bottles of Vodka, depending on how tough things are down there."

Deputy press secretary **Ginny Terzano** says she's signed the check over to Share Our Strength, a national hunger relief organization founded by former Senate aide **Billy Shore**. "They will appreciate the $50 as they work tirelessly to help feed the hungry," she said.

As for the spat between the Gingrich-Clinton folks, boxing great **Roberto Duran** said it best: "No mas."